MI Access™
Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program

Proposed MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Plan

English Language Arts And Mathematics

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability

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Purpose of the Assessment Plan

This document constitutes the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Plan. It was created to:

- provide important and pertinent background information on MI-Access, why it was developed, the three MI-Access assessments, and how the first two MI-Access assessments—Participation and Supported Independence–were developed and implemented;

- describe what the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments look like, including who is assessed, what Michigan Curriculum Framework content areas are assessed, the format of the assessments, the blueprints, and sample assessment items;

- enable districts, schools, special educators, and others to begin aligning curriculum, assessment, and instruction as needed; and

- inform students, parents, teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, and the public about the new Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.

> ***Plan:*** 1. A detailed scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of a task, goal, or objective. 2. A systematic arrangement of details; an outline or sketch.

Background on MI-Access

MI-Access, Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program, consists of three statewide assessments (each of which is comprised of one or more components) designed specifically for students with disabilities. All three assessments are based on Extended Grade Level Content Standards (EGLCEs) and Extended Benchmarks (EBs). Students participate in MI-Access because their Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams determined it was *not* appropriate for them to participate in the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), even with assessment accommodations.

The three current MI-Access assessments are

- MI-Access Participation, which was administered for the first time statewide in 2002, and is currently being revised to explicitly measure the Michigan Curriculum Framework content standards of English language arts and mathematics;

- MI-Access Supported Independence, which was also administered for the first time statewide in 2002, and is currently being revised to explicitly measure the Michigan Curriculum Framework content standards of English language arts and mathematics; and

- MI-Access Functional Independence, which was administered for the first time statewide to students in grades 3 through 8 in fall 2005 and students in grade 11 in spring 2006.

Why were alternate assessments needed? There are a number of reasons, all of which help to explain why MI-Access is part of the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS).

Federal Influences

MI-Access was created, in part, to comply with several federal legislative initiatives, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and its Title programs (I–IX), and most recently the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. In different ways, these laws maintain that assessments are an integral part of educational accountability because they provide valuable information that can benefit students by regularly measuring their progress against agreed-upon standards. They also maintain that *all* students—including those with disabilities—should be part of each state's accountability system and should not be treated separately.

> *Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS):* State Board of Education-approved assessment system, comprised of three state assessment programs: (1) the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), MI-Access, and the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) for English language learners.

State Influences

MI-Access also was developed in response to various State Board of Education (SBE) policies, priorities, and goals. The two goals that related most directly to MI-Access at the time of its development called for the state to (1) increase the participation and performance of students with disabilities on statewide assessments, and (2) develop guidelines for participation in alternate assessments for students for whom participation in the MEAP was inappropriate. Furthermore, in November 2001, when the SBE adopted a policy creating the MEAS, it stated that:

> *Alternate assessments:* Assessments used to measure the learning progress and performance of students with disabilities who, according to their IEP Teams, it is not appropriate to participate in general education assessments, even with assessment accommodations (i.e., the MEAP).

> "It shall be the policy of the State Board of Education that each local and intermediate school district and public school academy will ensure the participation of *all* students in the Michigan Educational Assessment System."

MI-Access helps achieve the SBE's policies, priorities, and goals in a number of ways. It provides (1) access to the high standards reflected in Michigan's Curriculum Framework Model Content Standards for the general curriculum, (2) access to the statewide assessment system for students with disabilities, and (3) access to meaningful results showing student performance.

Program Purpose and Implementation

Program Purpose

The overall purpose of MI-Access is to provide teachers, parents, and others with a point-in-time picture of what students with disabilities enrolled in a certain grade know and are able to do. The items selected for the assessments—all of which were designed with input from Michigan educators, including classroom teachers—are applicable to real-world situations; that is, they reflect the knowledge and skills students need to be successful in school and as adults.

The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments use a structured, on-demand standardized assessment activity format, which is more appropriate for the population being assessed. The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments v1.5, for example, use standardized assessment activities observed by two assessment administrators, a Primary and a Shadow assessment administrator. Students are observed as they carry out a standard set of activities. These activities explicitly measure the content areas of English language arts or mathematics and are administered during the course of a typical school day. The two assessment administrators will observe the students at the same time and score the students using a standardized scoring rubric.

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are not based on teacher observation, but instead resemble more traditional paper and pencil tests. They incorporate a variety of assessment item formats, including multiple-choice and constructed response, but are designed in such a way that students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a manner consistent with their level of cognitive functioning.

> **Standardization:** In test administration, maintaining a constant testing environment and conducting the test according to detailed rules and specifications, so that testing conditions are the same for all test takers.
>
> *Taken from "Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing," American Educational Research Association.*

To ensure that MI-Access complies with state and federal legislation, all of its assessments are linked with the Model Content Standards in English language arts and mathematics contained in the *Michigan Curriculum Framework*.

Program Implementation

Given the enormity and importance of the task of developing MI-Access, the MDE divided its implementation into four phases.

First Phase of Development: Participation and Supported Independence

The first generation of MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments were developed in the first phase. MI-Access *Participation* assessments are designed specifically for students who have, or function as if they have, *severe* cognitive impairment. These students are expected to require ongoing support in adulthood. They may also have both considerable cognitive and physical impairments that limit their ability to generalize or transfer learning, and thus may make determining their actual abilities and skills difficult. For that reason, the first generation of the MI-Access Participation assessments focused only on how a student responded to the *opportunity to participate* in an activity, not on how well he or she carried out that activity.

The MI-Access *Supported Independence* assessments are designed for students who have, or function as if they have, *moderate* cognitive impairment. These students are expected to require ongoing support in adulthood. They may also have both cognitive and physical impairments that impact their ability to generalize or transfer learning; however, they usually can follow learned routines and demonstrate independent living skills. The Supported Independence assessments, therefore, are designed to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Specifically, they measure how students perform certain tasks while acknowledging that they may require some allowable level of assistance to do so. (See Figure 1 for more information on the characteristics of students who would likely participate in MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments.)

In the first two years of implementation, MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments were administered once each year to students who were 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 18 years old. These ages were selected because (1) many students taking part in these assessments were not assigned a grade level, and (2) they ensured that students assessed with MI-Access were assessed with the same frequency as general education students (that is, the ages corresponded with the grades assessed by the MEAP).

Figure 1 Overview of MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence Students					
Level of Independence	Student Characteristics	Anticipated Life Roles	Curriculum	Instruction	Likely State Assessment
Participation	Have, or function as if they have, severe or profound cognitive impairments that preclude their ability to (or our skills to ascertain their abilities to) generalize learning.	Are expected to participate in major adult living roles. Will require extensive, ongoing support in all areas of functioning throughout life. Will be dependent on others for most, if not all, daily living needs.	Focuses mostly on the non-core Michigan Model Content Standards (career and employability, technology, health, and physical education). There also area academic content areas taught that are provided in with the Michigan Curriculum Framework and the Extended core academic standards and the extended grade level content expectations and benchmarks, but in the real-life contexts.	Requires collaboration among teachers, parents, and therapists to determine the "maximum extent possible" concept for each student. Encourages consistent instructional focus among educators. Requires that home, school, and community work together to integrate each student as much as possible into major life roles. Includes use of assistive devices and accommodations.	MI-Access Participation
Supported Independence	Have, or function as if they have, moderate cognitive impairments that seriously impact their ability to generalize or transfer learning.	Are expected to achieve supported independence in adulthood. Will require some supervision throughout lives, but can learn skills to maximize independence.	Based on a combination of the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* core and non-core content standards, extended benchmarks, and extended grade level content expectations.	Direct instruction carried out within settings in which students are and will be expected to function.	MI-Access Supported Independence

In 2003/2004, however, MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence were converted from ages to grades in order to comply with NCLB requirements of assessing student once in elementary school, middle school and high school. With that conversion, students in grades 4, 7, 8, and 11 were assessed since these were the grades in which English language arts and/or mathematics were assessed by the MEAP.

In 2005/2006, grades 3, 5, and 6 were added as required by federal law. The first generation of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments did *not* meet all of the NCLB criteria for alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards. As result, new Participation and Supported Independence assessments in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics are in the third phase of development: MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 (See page 8).

Second Phase of Development: MI-Access Functional Independence

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments are designed for students whose IEP Teams have determined it is not appropriate for them to take part in the MEAP, the MEAP with assessment accommodations, MI-Access Participation, or MI-Access Supported Independence. This primarily involves students who have, or function as if they have, *mild* cognitive impairment. They also have a limited ability to generalize learning across contexts, their learning rates are *significantly slower* than those of their age-level peers, they have a restricted knowledge base, they tend not to be very aware of environmental cues or details, *and* they do not learn incidentally. In adulthood, these students will most likely be able to meet their own needs and live successfully in their communities without overt support from others. It was determined that these students could benefit from an assessment containing a mix of English language arts and mathematics items presented in the contexts of daily living, employment, and community experience. (See Figure 2 for more information on the characteristics of students who would likely participate in the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments.)

The MI-Access Functional Independence assessments were implemented for the first time statewide in 2005/2006. They were administered in the fall to students in grades 3 through 8 and in the spring to students in grade 11. As required by federal law, the assessments include the content areas of English language arts and mathematics.

Figure 2 Overview of MI-Access Functional Independence Students					
Level of Independence	**Student Characteristics**	**Anticipated Life Roles**	**Curriculum**	**Instruction**	**Likely State Assessment**
Functional Independence	Have, or function as if they have, mild cognitive impairments that impact their ability to transfer and generalize learning across performance contexts. Learning rate is significantly slower than age-level peers (roughly one-half to three-quarters the rate). Restricted knowledge base. Tend not to be very aware of environmental cues or details. Do not learn incidentally.	Are expected to achieve a functional level of independence in adulthood.	Based on the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* content standards, benchmarks, extended grade level content expectations (grades 3-8) and extended benchmarks (grade 11). Focuses on basic academics, social effectiveness, health and fitness, community access and use, work, and personal and family living. Stresses minimal reliance on others and maximum functional independence.	Direct instruction and repetition with practical, authentic, and concrete experiences with academic content areas reflecting real world contexts. After mastery, should continue to present the concept/skill in gradually varying contexts and instructional situations to maximize knowledge/skill transfer. Includes frequent reminders to be alert to environmental cues. Highlights salient information and reduces distracting and irrelevant stimuli.	MI-Access Functional Independence Content areas: English language arts and mathematics.

***Third Phase of Development: New Participation and Supported Independence v1.5
Assessments in the Content Areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics***
The third phase of completing MI-Access, Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program is to
retire the first generation of MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence
assessments and developing new ones, which meet all of the NCLB criteria for alternate
assessments based on alternate achievement standards. These assessments are referred to
as the MI-Access v1.5 Participation and Supported Independence assessments in the
content areas of English language arts and mathematics. More details related to these new
assessments can be found on pages 15-26.

Fourth Phase of Development: Development of MI-Access Science Assessments
The fourth phase of completing the MI-Access assessments is the development of science
assessments for all three levels of MI-Access. These assessments are required by NCLB to
be implemented no later than the 2007/2008 school year. The development of these
assessments began during the 2005/2006 school year and will be piloted during
January/February 2007. There will be an assessment plan developed specifically to describe
the MI-Access science assessments, so they will not be addressed any further in this
assessment plan focused on the MI-Access v1.5 Participation and Supported Independence
assessments in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics.

Participation in the MEAP Assessments
While there is a clear role for alternate assessments within the state's assessment system, it
is important to keep in mind that the vast majority of students with disabilities should
participate in the state's general assessment (the MEAP) with or without assessment
accommodations. Alternate assessment is ***not*** intended for ***all*** students with disabilities; it
is only appropriate for a small percentage of them. MI-Access also is *not* appropriate for
students with Section 504 Plans. (See Figure 3 for more information on the characteristics
of students with disabilities who would most likely participate in the MEAP.)

Figure 3
Overview of Students with Disabilities Who Would Likely Take the MEAP

Level of Independence	Student Characteristics	Anticipated Life Roles	Curriculum	Instruction	Likely State Assessment
Full Independence	Have physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. Function in the normal range of intelligence. Have the cognitive ability to transfer or generalize learning across performance contexts. Have the capacity to apply knowledge and skills to the tasks, problems, or activities encountered in life.	Are expected to achieve full independence in adulthood.	Based on the *Michigan Curriculum Framework's* content standards, Grade Level Content Standards, benchmarks, and grade level content expectations.	Often requires accommodations, assistive devices, adaptive strategies, and/or technology to assure student success in the general curriculum. Needs to include knowledge and skills necessary to effectively use the above.	MEAP with or without accommodations. Content Areas: English language arts and mathematics

Figure 4 shows when the new MI-Access v1.5 assessments—Participation and Supported Independence—will developed and implemented.

Figure 4: Tentative MI-Access Development Timeline MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence (P/SI) v1.5		
Task	**Timeline**	**Comments**
Meet with Jeremy Hughes, MDE Chief Academic Officer, with proposal to meet with Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs (SLIP) to review Peer Review results for MI-Access and to solicit SLIP's assistance.	April 12, 2006	Proposed meeting with SLIP approved by Jeremy Hughes. Completed
Prepare suggested procedure to develop P/SI v1.5 assessments in the content areas of ELA and mathematics	April 11-13, 2006	Completed
Meeting with Ed Roeber, OEAA Senior Executive Director, to review process for developing P/SI v1.5 assessments	April 14, 2006	Procedure approved
Extend ELA and mathematics Grade Level Content Standards (GLCE) and Benchmarks (B)	Fall 2005	Draft document is being reviewed to ensure the EGLCE and EB do reflect the original GLCE. Draft completed
Field Review of Draft Extended GLCE and Benchmarks	Fall 2006	In progress
Prepare for April 25 meeting 1. Facilitators contacted 2. ASWDP staff meet to discuss agenda for April 25 3. Draft sample assessment activities 4. Copy meeting materials 5. Arrange for meeting equipment 6. order meals	April 14 – April 24	Completed
Purpose of Meeting with Supervisors of Low Incidence Programs was to: 1. Review Peer Review results for MI-Access and impact on AYP. 2. Review process to develop P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics assessment activities 3. Review new scoring rubric being used for science 4. Draft MI-Access P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics assessment activities 5. Discuss with districts about conducting field tests of new P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics	April 25,2006	Successfully completed. Approximately 60 participants.

assessment activities. 6. Solicit for participation in continuing to write assessment activities following April 25 meeting.		
Review work completed at April 25 meeting. 1. Develop item specs, based on work completed by SLIP, for the continued development of assessment activities. 2. Contact people to finish writing assessment activities	April 26 – June 30, 2006	Draft assessment activity development completed.
Prepare P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics assessment activities for July 21 item review	June 1-July 14, 2006	In progress
National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) invited Michigan to participate in a study of alternate assessment systems, including content standards and classroom instruction. Alignment studies on all MI-Access assessment. Commitment letter signed and sent to NAAC.	June 23, 2006	Completed
Develop assessment blue prints for each assessment P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics	June 2006	Completed
MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments presented to OEAA National Technical Advisory Committee. TAC was asked for recommendations on how to use the two scores from the Primary and Secondary Assessment Administrator for reporting purposes.	July 6, 2006	Completed
Develop Mock Reports	July 2006	Completed
Write *Proposed MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English and Mathematics Assessment Plan*	June 15 – July 11, 2006	Completed
Draft Field Test assessment booklets	June 15 – July 12, 2006	Completed
Item (assessment activity) review	July 21, 2006	
Revised item bank and Field Test assessment booklets based on item review	July 22 – August 11	
Produce P/SI v1.5 Online Learning Program to train Michigan educators involved with the administration of the P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics assessments.	July – August 2006	Pre-production meeting held July 10, 2006 In progress
Draft Student Observation Sheets (scan documents) to record observations	July 2006	Completed
Develop Fall 2006 Field Test and Spring 2007 MI-Access P/SI v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics Coordinator and Assessment Administration Manual.	July/August 2006	

P/SI v1.5 ELA and mathematics item banks provided to BETA/TASA following July 21 item review to produce Spring 2007 P/SI v1.5 assessment booklets	August 2006	
Develop online survey questions for field review of *Proposed MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English and Mathematics Assessment Plan*	August 2006	
Field review of *Proposed MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English and Mathematics Assessment Plan*	Mid August – October 2006	
Field Tests conducted with feedback from participating districts	October – November 2006	
Review comments from Field Tests and prepare them to be used at the SRC and CAC Item Review in November	November 2006	
SRC and CAC Item review of Field Test activities with data and development P/SI v1.5 performance level descriptors for ELA and mathematics	November 2006	
Spring 2007 Items selected and camera-ready booklets produced by BETA/TASA	November/December 2006	
Proofread booklets and final approval	December 2006	
Camera-ready booklets to printer	December 2006	
Present Field Test data to TAC to make determination on how to incorporate both assessment administrators scores for reporting purposes, to approved standard setting plan, and to review the PLDs drafted by the CAC.	January 2007	
Statewide Implementation of New MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments	February 19 – April 14, 2007	
Standard Setting conducted with Michigan stakeholders	May 2007	
Recommended cut scores to TAC	May/June2007	
Recommended cut scores and Performance Level Descriptors to the State Board of Education for approval	May/June 2007	
Write MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English and Mathematics Assessment Technical Report	April – August 2007	
NACC conducts alignment studies on New MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments.	2007/2008 Actual dates TBD with NAAC.	Actual dates TBD with NAAC.

Development of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment and the Proposed Assessment Plan

As a first step in developing the *Proposed MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Plan*—and ultimately the assessments themselves—the MDE convened a Participation/Supported Independence (P/SI) Assessment Plan Writing Team (hereafter referred to as the APWT) of 40 educators and parents experienced in working with learners with special needs during the 2005/2006 school year. The MDE's goal was to establish a well-balanced team of individuals representing a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experience, including general and special education teachers, parents, teacher consultants, administrators, school psychologists, and so forth. The group also was intentionally geographically and demographically diverse. (See Appendix A for a list of team members.)

The P/SI APWT met three times during 2005 to draft the Extended Grade Level Content Expectations (elementary and middle school) and Extended Benchmarks (high school) The original APWT expanded to 74 members following the USED Peer Review results related to the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments administered during the 2005/2006 school year. The support from Michigan educators to develop assessments that meet all of the NCLB criteria was phenomenal. The knowledge and expertise of Michigan educators and parents was integral to the successful

> ***Assessment Plan:*** Much like a builder's blueprint, an assessment plan guides how an assessment is built or developed. It includes detailed information on (1) the assumptions underlying the assessment; (2) the populations and subject areas assessed; (3) the number of assessment items and their formats; (4) prototype items to guide item writers; and (5) other information clarifying how and why the assessment should be developed.

development of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Plan and the assessments activities and scoring rubrics.

To develop the P/SI v1.5 assessments, Michigan educators and MI-Access staff used the original P and SI activities, which were eligible to be used on the operational assessments the from 2001 thru the 2005/2006 school year, to revise to *explicitly* assess English language arts or mathematics. In addition, Michigan educators used the Draft English Language Arts and Mathematics Extended Grade Level Content Expectations (EGLCEs) and Extended Benchmarks (EBs) that the original P/SI APWT drafted during the 2005/2006 school year. (NOTE: These EGLCEs and EBs and are in the process of being reviewed to ensure they reflect the original GLCE and benchmarks and are being prepared for a fall 2006 field review.)

The original P and SI assessment activities are being used as the performance context for assessing English language arts or mathematics content because the MI-Access Team knows that P and SI students are routinely involved with these types of activities. In addition, the scoring rubrics developed by the Science APWT, will replace the current P and SI scoring guides. Professional development related to these new scoring rubrics will be developed over the summer and will be available prior to being field tested.

The P/SI v1.5 assessment activities will be field-tested fall 2006 throughout the state to obtain teacher feedback on things such as whether or not the activities are easy to understand in relationship to (1) the academic content being assessed, (2) what should be

observed, and (3) what the role of the Primary Assessment Administrator was and the Shadow Assessment Administrator, and (4) if the scoring rubrics were easy to learn and apply in order to score the student responses.

The MI-Access Team put together a packet of information on the P/SI v1.5 assessments that was sent to the USED to review and determine if they meet all of the NCLB alternate assessment criteria. These new assessments will only be administered in 2006/2007 *if* the USED approves these assessments. It is expected that the USED will be able to make their decision no later than November 2006, which means that the P/SI v1.5 assessments in grades 3-8 will be administered during the Spring 2007 MI-Access assessment window along with grade 11. Please note that the MI-Access grades 3-8 Functional Independence assessments *will* be administered during the Fall 2006 assessment window whether or not the P/SI v1.5 assessments get the "go ahead to administer" from the USED in time for Fall 2006.

Identifying Content Assessable at the State Level

After the APWT finished drafting the EGLCE and EB they shifted their focus toward discussing other components of the assessment plan within their content areas.

- What results/scores will be reported?

- Which of the unpacked content standards, extended benchmarks, and/or extended GLCEs can be assessed appropriately at the state level?

- How might the state assessable EGLCE and EB be assessed? What strategies could be used?

- What task/item formats and response modes might be used? Create prototypes.

- What practical issues are related to the proposed content (e.g., the length of the assessment, the time of administration, the validity/reliability issues related to having one or two assessment administrators observing each assessment activity, and so forth)?

After asking and answering these questions, each content area sub-group began compiling a more detailed description of the assumptions underlying their particular assessment; the assessment format; the number, format, and distribution of items (often referred to as the assessment "blueprint"); the time the assessment would take; and how assessment results might be reported.

Universal Test Design

When developing the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments universal design principles were used. "Universally designed" assessments are based on the premise that every child deserves to participate in assessment, and that assessment results should not be affected by disability, gender, race, or English language proficiency. In addition, universally designed assessments aim to reduce the need for assessment accommodations by removing access barriers associated with the tests themselves. (National Center for Educational Outcomes, *Universal Design Applied to Large Scale Assessments, Synthesis Report 44.*)

What does that mean in practice? There are several elements of universal design that the APWT used to prepare its plans and blueprints. Following is a brief discussion of some of them.

Accessibility: The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments include a broad range of students with diverse learning needs and universal design provides students with meaningful opportunities to demonstrate their competence using the same content standards in English language arts and mathematics as the general state assessment.

Accommodations: The need for assessment accommodations can be reduced if assessments are developed thoughtfully and with the broad student assessment population clearly in mind. To that end, particular characteristics of the student populations that would be participating in MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments were considered at each stage of development. Furthermore, barriers will be removed whenever possible, such as (1) using graphs or pictures only when necessary and accompanying them with verbal/textual descriptions, (2) eliminating distracting or purely decorative pictures, (3) designing the assessments to be administered in multiple, short sessions to reduce the need for extra breaks and/or extended time, and (4) allowing multiple access and response modes to further reduce the need for assessment accommodations. At every turn, efforts to reduce barriers were explored to ensure that students would have every opportunity to participate fully and meaningfully in the assessments.

> ***Assessment Accommodation***: An assessment procedure that is intended to minimize the impact of a student's disability on his/her performance on the assessment. Decisions regarding accommodations should be made on an

Clear Constructs: The APWT made a concerted effort to remove what the National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) refers to as non-construct-oriented cognitive, sensory, emotional, and physical barriers. In other words, it wanted to make sure that students could participate in the assessments in the same way they participate in instruction, if it did not change what was being measured by the assessments. For example, if students access print by having it read to them during instruction, then they should be able to have the assessments read to them without affecting the validity of their scores. The intent of the APWT was to develop proposed assessments that measure a student's ability to comprehend what is read or seen, not how he or she accesses the information. This principle was applied to both the English language arts and mathematics content areas.

Instructions and Procedures: As assessment items were developed, Michigan educators recommended that simple, clear, and intuitive instructions and procedures be used. It also recommended that item writers employ consistent components in every assessment activity, such as the scoring focus, the performance context, and in addition, it recommended that all directions given to assessment administrators be clear and direct so that student knowledge would be assessed as opposed to the administrator's ability to discern meaning from the instructions.

While there are other universal design principles that the APWT followed, these examples demonstrate the group's attempt to ensure that the MI-Access P/SI v1.5 assessment activities are accessible, are designed to meet the unique and varying needs of the student populations being assessed, and yet are still valid in that they measure the EGLCE and EB.

Following are the detailed assessment descriptions that were developed by each APWT sub-group. They are the cornerstones of the MI-Access Functional Independence Assessment Plan, and give a clear view of what the assessment for each content area looks like.

Description of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts Assessments

The ELA sub-group recommended that the MI-Access P/SI ELA assessments have two primary areas of focus: accessing information and expressing ideas. These areas of focus are similar to the ones for MI-Access Functional Independence (accessing information and expressing ideas), which provided a consistent continuum for all three MI-Access ELA assessments. With regard to accessing information, students are assessed on their ability to gain meaning from print/pictures and by listening including word knowledge and comprehension. With regard to expressing ideas, students are to provide their ideas by speaking or other communication modes appropriate for the individual student.

While some of the students taking the MI-Access P/SI v1.5 ELA assessments will be able to read simple texts and can produce simple written responses, it is widely acknowledged that these populations also use the language arts modes of listening, viewing, speaking, and visual representation (such as drawing) to successfully communicate. Therefore, the needs of non-reading and non-writing students are accommodated on the P/SI v1.5 ELA assessments.

Constructs Assessed
The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence ELA assessments cover much of the same content as the MI-Access Functional Independence assessments, but the content is reduced in depth, breadth and complexity that is appropriate for the populations being assessed. For example, instead of assessing a student's ability to *decode* print, these assessments measure a student's ability to *access* information, whether it is presented as print or pictures similar to the same way that the student accesses information during instruction. Similarly, instead of measuring a student's ability in the area of *written* expression, these assessments measure a student's ability to *express* meaning, again in whatever form he or she typically uses to express thoughts and ideas in the classroom.

Furthermore, many of the standard and nonstandard accommodations students with disabilities need to participate effectively in the MEAP ELA assessments are not needed to participate in MI-Access P/SI v1.5 assessments. This is because the latter assessments are universally designed, which means they were developed in such a way that the need for accommodations is reduced, if not eliminated, by removing barriers to accessing the assessment to demonstrate what students know related to ELA.

Grades Assessed
As required by federal law (NCLB), the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence ELA assessments are administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The student populations taking part in these assessments are described in detail in Figure 2 on page 7.

Assessment Format

While item difficulty varies some for each grade cluster MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence ELA assessment, the general organization of the assessments is the same. The assessment activities are based on three adult life contexts (community experience, daily living skills, and employment) and comprised of three distinct components (word study, comprehension, and expressing ideas). The components are described below.

Word Study: Part one of the P/SI v1.5 assessments is called Word study. Students are asked to participate in assessment activities that measure their ability to access or recognize highly familiar and frequently encountered words in print or a picture representing the printed words while participating in a performance context that typically occurs in the classroom.

Comprehension: Part two of the assessment is called Comprehension. Students participate in assessment activities that allow them to access various forms of information that are based on the three adult life contexts.

Expressing Ideas: Part three of the assessment is called expressing ideas. Students respond participate in activities that provide the student opportunities to express their ideas by writing, drawing, dictating, gestures or using a combination of response modes.

Assessment Blueprint

The purpose of a blueprint is to show how many assessment items are included in an assessment. The ELA blueprints are captured in Figures 5 and 6. Please note that the assessments for each grade cluster are divided into two major sections–*Accessing Information* and *Expressing Ideas*.

The ELA assessments include both core and embedded assessment activities. Core items are those upon which students' scores are based. Embedded items are those that are placed in the assessment for field testing purposes to gather statistical data; performance on these items does not impact a student's score. The Participation assessment activities are scored using a 3-point scoring rubric. While the MI-Access Supported Independence assessment activities are scored using a 2-point rubric.

Figure 5 Participation v1.5 English Language Arts: Grades 3-8 and 11			
English Language Arts Assessment Components	**Number Core Items**	**Number Embedded Field Test Items**	**Tentative Number Released**
Accessing Information	**6**	**3**	**3**
Word Study	3	1	1
Comprehension	3	2	2
Expressing Ideas	**4**	**2**	**1**
Total Number of Items on Test	10	5	4

Figure 6 Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts: Grades 3-8 and 11			
English Language Arts Assessment Components	**Number Core Items**	**Number Embedded Field Test Items**	**Tentative Number Released**
Accessing Information	**9**	**3**	**3**
Word Study	4	1	1
Comprehension	5	2	2
Expressing Ideas	**6**	**2**	**1**
Total Number of Items on Test	15	5	4

Description of the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Mathematics Assessments

The APWT mathematics sub-group recommended that the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence mathematics assessments have four overarching areas of focus: (1) numbers and operations, (2) data analysis, (3) geometry, and (4) measurement. However, algebra is a focus for Supported Independence in the middle school and high school assessments.

It is understood that the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence student populations access information—including mathematical information and concepts—in a variety of ways. While some students will read numbers, others will use listening, viewing, speaking, and visual representation (such as drawing) skills when responding during the assessment activities. Therefore, the mathematics assessments will pay close attention to the needs of non-reading and non-writing students, and will be designed in such a way that they measure a student's knowledge of mathematical concepts as opposed to his or her reading and/or writing ability.

Constructs Assessed

The MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence mathematics assessments assess much of the same content as the MEAP. There are differences, however, in the number of assessment items and the depth, breadth and complexity has been reduced appropriately for the populations being assessed. In addition, many of the standard and nonstandard accommodations that students with disabilities need to participate fully in the MEAP are not needed to participate in MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence assessments. This is because the latter assessments are universally designed, which means they were developed in such a way that the need for accommodations is reduced, if not eliminated, by removing barriers to accessing the assessment to demonstrate what students know related to mathematics.

Grades Assessed

As required by federal law (NCLB), the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence mathematics assessments are administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and 11. The student populations taking part in these assessments is described in detail in Figure 2 on page 7.

Assessment Format

While item difficulty varies on specific grade-level MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence mathematics assessments, they generally are designed the same way.

- All items are provided in a real-world context.

- Hands-on materials or objects—such as coins, clocks, and so forth—may be used as long as the material or object does NOT change the nature of a question or elicit a different response.

Assessment Blueprint

The purpose of a blueprint is to show how many assessment items are included in an assessment, in this case, by strand and topic. Three tables were created to provide this information as it relates to mathematics: Figure 9 shows the blueprint for Participation grades 3-8 and 11, Figure 10 shows the blueprint for Supported Independence grades 3-5, and Figure 11 shows the blueprint for Supported Independence grades 6-8 and 11 assessments.

The mathematics assessments include both core and embedded assessment activities. Core items are those upon which students' scores are based. Embedded items are those that are placed in the assessment for field testing purposes to gather statistical data; performance on these items does not impact a student's score. The Participation assessment activities are scored using a 3-point scoring rubric. While the MI-Access Supported Independence assessment activities are scored using a 2-point rubric.

Figure 9 Participation v1.5 Mathematics Blueprint: Grades 3-8 and 11				
Domain(# of Items)	**Topic**	**Number Core Items**	**Number Embedded Field Test Items**	**Tentative Number Released Items**
Numbers & Operations	Count, Write and Order Whole Numbers	1		1
	Compute with Whole Numbers	0	1	
	Problem Solving and Estimation	1		
	Fractions and Decimals	1		
Algebra	Expressions and Equations	Not Assessed	Not Assessed	Not Assessed
Measurement	Measure and Use Units	1	2	1
	Money	1		
Geometry	Identify and Describe Shapes	1		
	Use Maps and Grids	2	1	2
	Patterns	1		1
Data Analysis	Explore and Interpret Data	1	1	
	TOTAL	10	5	5

Figure 10
Supported Independence v1.5 Mathematics Blueprint: Grades 3-5

Domain(# of Items)	Topic	Number Core Items	Number Embedded Field Test Items	Tentative Number Released Items
Numbers & Operations	Count, Write and Order Whole Numbers	3	1	1
	Compute with Whole Numbers	1		
	Problem Solving and Estimation	1		
	Fractions and Decimals			
Algebra	Expressions and Equations			
Measurement	Measure and Use Units	3	2	2
	Money	1		
Geometry	Identify and Describe Shapes	1		
	Use Maps and Grids	1	1	1
	Patterns	2		
Data Analysis	Explore and Interpret Data	2	1	1
TOTAL		15	5	5

Figure 11
Supported Independence v1.5 Mathematics Blueprint: Grades 6-8 and 11

Domain(# of Items)	Topic	Number Core Items	Number Embedded Field Test Items	Tentative Number Released Items
Numbers & Operations	Count, Write and Order Whole Numbers	3	1	1
	Compute with Whole Numbers	1		
	Problem Solving and Estimation	1		
	Fractions and Decimals			
Algebra	Expressions and Equations			
Measurement	Measure and Use Units	3	2	2
	Money	1		
Geometry	Identify and Describe Shapes	1		
	Use Maps and Grids	1	1	1
	Patterns	2		
Data Analysis	Explore and Interpret Data	2	1	1
TOTAL		15	5	5

Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Activities and Scoring Rubrics

Due to the expedited assessment development process that needed to be used in order to meet the USED's requirement that the new MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments needed to be in place by the end of the 2006/2007 school year, it was decided to use existing resources such as (1) the draft Participation and Supported Independence Extended Grade Level Content Expectations and Extended Benchmarks in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics that were drafted by the ELA/Mathematics APWT, (2) the English language arts and mathematics designations the ELA/Mathematics APWT applied to each of the existing Participation and Supported Independence assessment activities, (3) the existing Participation and Supported Independence assessment activities, and (4) the scoring rubrics developed by the MI-Access Science APWT.

The reason the existing Participation and Supported Independence assessments were used as the foundation for writing new activities explicitly measuring English language arts and mathematics were (1) that they were known performance contexts that students experienced during a typical day in the classroom and (2) it would make an easier transition from the old assessments to the new MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments for Michigan educators involved with administering them.

The following steps were used for writing the new Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Activities

Step 1: Begin by examining an original Participation or Supported Independence (P/SI) activity and the Performance Requirements that correspond to the appropriate assessment.*

Step 2: Determine if the P/SI Assessment Plan Writing Team (APWT) designated the activity Mathematics (M), English Language Arts (E), or both (E/M).*

Step 3: Examine the Draft Participation or Supported Independence Extended Grade Level Content Expectations/Benchmarks (EGLCE/EB) for the appropriate content area (E or M). Each activity you write or revise should be coded to one primary draft EGLCE/EB, so if an original activity was coded E/M, you must choose one or the other content area.*

Step 4: Examine the Key Words identified by the APWT and choose a draft P/SI EGLCE/EB that has been linked to the original activity, or a different one that you feel best contains the type of mathematics or English language arts the activity should assess and be scored against.*

Step 5: Reword the original activity language, by incorporating language from the draft P/SI EGLCE/EB and key concepts that you have decided to use.*

Step 6: The reworded activity should reflect, as clearly as possible, the link between what the student being observed would be doing and a draft P/SI EGLCE/EB. This is to ensure that every activity can be accurately designated as Mathematics or ELA.

Step 7: Sometimes that are more than one draft P/SI EGLCE/EB can be linked to an activity. If so, link as many draft EGLCE/EB to the activity as appropriate. However, each activity will need *one* draft P/SI EGLCE/EB code indicating the EGLCE or EB that will be the **scoring focus** for the activity and will be used for reporting purposes. Indicate which single draft EGLCE/EB will be the scoring focus on the activity page.*

Step 8: Finally, indicate which adult life context (Community Experience, Employment, or Daily Living Skills) is most reflective of the activity.

Step 9: Each revised or new activity must contain the following components:
   a. Every activity must clearly articulate what the student will be expected to demonstrate. Each activity should begin with "The student will…"
   b. The language of this section should contain a phrase or key words taken directly from the EGLCE/EB. The same phrase or key words should also appear in the scoring focus.*
   c. The performance contexts (PCs) the student may be observed in while demonstrating the EGLCE/EB. Example PCs include leisure activities, dressing routines, cleaning and grooming routines, and moving through familiar environments.
   d. Examples of things the student could engage in that lend themselves to helping the assessment administrator determine if they have demonstrated the expectation or benchmark. These could include specific actions such as dressing for art, brushing teeth, selecting reading materials, or navigating the classroom. The examples should focus on the designated content area (English language arts or mathematics).

The components are highlighted below as they appear in the following example.

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the routes involved in navigating the school building or classroom by delivering such things as classroom supplies or notices to two specified destinations.

*For steps 1-5, 7 and 9b use the documents titled Mathematics (or English language arts) Assessment Activities, Content Area Designations, and Links to Extended Grade Level Content Expectations (EGLCE)/Extended Benchmarks (EB) in addition to the draft English language arts and Mathematics Extended Grade Level Content Expectations and Extended Benchmarks for Supported Independence and Participation**.**

Scoring Rubrics
As noted in the nine steps for writing activities above, each revised or new activity will need to contain what the student is required to demonstrate. To assist with this, the P/SI v1.5 scoring rubrics have been included to provide information on how the items will be scored. The language used in each activity describing what the student is required to demonstrate *must* permit a valid and easy application of the rubric. Each student's performance on the activities will be applied to the rubric by two different school personnel. The Primary Assessment Administrator must be a professional school staff person (i.e., classroom teacher, teacher consultant, school psychologist) and the Shadow Assessment Administrator may be another teacher, related service provider (i.e., school psychologist, speech and language pathologist, etc.), or paraprofessional.

MI-Access Participation V1.5 Scoring Rubric

◆ Based on student responding correctly
◆ Level of assistance
◆ Participation has a 3-point rubric with 3 condition codes

Score Point	Definition
3	Responds correctly with no teacher assistance
2	Responds correctly after teacher provides verbal/physical cues
1	Responds correctly after teacher provides physical assistance and/or modeling, short of hand-over-hand assistance
Condition Code** or Zero Score Points	Definition
A	Incorrect Response
B	Resists/Refuses to participate
C	Teacher provides hand-over-hand assistance

** All condition codes result in no points.

Supported Independence Scoring Rubric

◆ Based on student responding correctly
◆ Level of assistance
◆ 2-point rubric with 3 condition codes

Score Point	Definition
2	Responds correctly with no teacher assistance
1	Responds correctly after teacher provides verbal/physical cues
Condition Code** or Zero Score Points	Definition
A	Incorrect Response
B	Resists/Refuses to participate
C	Teacher provides hand-over-hand assistance

** All condition codes result in no points.

Sample Assessment Activities and Item Coding

Participation and Supported Independence v1.5
English Language Arts and Mathematics Item Coding Schematic

CHARACTERS	INFORMATION	EXAMPLE
1	Content Area	M or E
2-3	Assessment	PA or SI
4	Adult Life Context	C, E, or D
5-6	Assessment Component (ELA only)	WS, CP, EI
7-X	Extended GLCE (Grades 3-8) -or- Grade Level of Extended Benchmark (Grade 11 only)	
Development Year	06	
Number of Item for the EGLCE or EB	01, 02, 03 and so forth	

Item Code Abbreviations Key

Content Area Code
E   English Language Arts
M   Mathematics

PA   Participation
SI   Supported Independence

Adult Life Context Code
C   Community Experience
E   Employment
D   Daily Living Skills

Test Component Code (ELA only)
WS   Word Study
CP   Comprehension
EI   Expressing Ideas

Examples of Original and Revised Assessment Activities

Below are examples of how original P or SI activities were revised to more *explicitly* reflect English language arts or Mathematics. The original activity is presented, followed by one option of how the activity might be reworded to include language related to key concepts and draft P/SI EGLCEs and EBs, in order to show the links between the activity and the EGLCE or EB. The "Draft EGLCE/EB Code" refers to the draft EGLCE or EB that the new activity is written to assess. Remember, each activity may be linked to more than one draft EGLCE or EB, but should assess one, primary GLCE or EB.

EXAMPLE 1: English Language Arts-Participation

Original Activity and Code
The student will interact with a caregiver at school.
4/8/11B-P-PE2-1-SN:54

Revised Activity: The student will answer correctly at least 3 questions from a school caregiver related to a familiar routine such a class schedule, lunch routine, or personal hygiene routine.

Scoring Focus: Responding to questions regarding routine

Draft EGLCE/EB Code(s): W.PR.M.EG1, L.CN.m.EG1

Primary Draft EGLCE/EB Code for Reporting Purposes: L.CN.m.EG1-06-3

Adult life context: Community Experience   Employment   <u>Daily Living skills</u>

EXAMPLE 2: Mathematics-Participation

Original Activity and Code
The student will participate in delivering such things as classroom supplies or notices to at least two destinations within the school setting.
7/11A-P-PE5-3-10-SN:257

Revised Activity: The student will correctly demonstrate knowledge of the routes involved in navigating the school building by delivering such things as classroom supplies or notices to two specified destinations.

Scoring Focus: Demonstrate that they can find targeted areas/objects.

Draft EGLCE/EB Code(s): G.LO.m.EG1, M.PS.e.EG4

Primary Draft EGLCE/EB Code for Reporting Purposes: G.LO.m.EG1

Adult life context: <u>Community Experience</u>   Employment   Daily Living skills

EXAMPLE 3: English Language Arts-Supported Independence

Original Activity and Code
The student will interact effectively with others during school lunchtime. This may include remaining in the assigned area as scheduled, following lunch rules and routines, seeking needed assistance, and interacting with staff and classmates in socially acceptable ways.

4/8/11B-SI-PE5-2-1-SN:115

Revised Activity: The student will promote self-advocacy during their school lunchtime by asking for assistance when a needed item is not available such as a particular food choice, utensils, or napkins.

Scoring Focus: Promoting self-advocacy

Draft EGLCE/EB Code(s): S.DS.M.EG3, W.PR.M.EG3

Primary Draft EGLCE/EB Code for Reporting Purposes: S.DS.M.EG3

Adult life context: Community Experience   Employment   <u>Daily Living skills</u>

EXAMPLE 4: Mathematics-Supported Independence

Original Activity and Code
The student will complete a familiar dressing routine related to a specific activity, such as putting on clothing used for art (smock), cooking (apron), physical education (P.E. clothes), shop (safety glasses), or cafeteria work (hairnet).
7/11A-SI-PE1-1-1-SN:213

<u>Revised Activity:</u> The student will correctly demonstrate an understanding of two terms describing position of objects in space (e.g., above, below, under, left, right) while completing a familiar dressing routine related to a specific activity, such as putting on clothing used for art (smock), cooking (apron), physical education (P.E. clothes), shop (safety glasses), or cafeteria work (hairnet).

Scoring Focus: Focus for scoring is on correct response to terms describing position of objects.

Draft EGLCE/EB Code(s): G.GS.m.EG2, N.MR.e.EG3

Primary Draft EGLCE/EB Code for Reporting Purposes: G.GS.m.EG2

Adult life Context: Community Experience   <u>Employment</u>   Daily Living Skills

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Administering and Reporting MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 Assessment Results

Assessment Administration

The MI-Access assessment window for grades 3-8 is typically during the fall at the same time as MEAP grades 3-9 assessments are administered. However, for the 2006/2007 school year, the MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessments in English language arts and mathematics will be assessed in the spring at the same time students in grade 11 will be assessed. The reason for this is that the new Participation and Supported Independence assessments needed to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for Peer Review and approval and there was insufficient time to field test and prepare assessment materials for the fall 2006 assessment window. Please note that starting with the 2007/2008 school year the grades 3-8 MI-Access Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments will return to the fall assessment window. The assessment window will be open for six weeks to allow for the amount of time it takes to administer the assessments to students individually.

Assessment Results

Each Participation and Supported Independence v1.5 assessment activities are scored by *two* assessment administrators observing the activity at the same time. The MI-Access Participation scoring rubric is a 3-point scoring rubric. The MI-Access Supported Independence scoring rubric is a 2-point rubric. It is still under discussion on how to use the two assessment administrators' scores when calculating the assessments total points. The OEAA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) discussed this issue at the July 2006 TAC meeting. However, the TAC requested actual item data before making their final recommendation. Therefore, this decision will not be finalized until after the TAC meets in January 2007 and reviews the fall 2006 field test data.

APPENDIX A:

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